

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 5270

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 AMMAN 2019

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARA 1 TEXT GARBLED)

FOR INR SAUNDERS FROM ATHERTON

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PGOV, PEPR, JO, US, XF

SUBJECT: ATHERTON MEETING WITH HUSSEIN TOMORROW, MARCH 4

1. WE HAVE JUST HAD A STRATEGY SESSION WITH PICKERING FOR TOMORROW'S MEETING WITH HUSSEIN (PROBABLY IN EARLY AFTERNOON, PRECEDED BY PRELIMINARY INFORMAL MEETING WITH SHARAF). THE APPROACH I PLAN TO TAKE AND GROUND I INTEND TO COVER ARE SET FORTH BELOW, RECOGNIZING THAT ACTUAL PRESENTATION WILL HAVE TO BE TAILORED TO HOW THE CONVERSATION DEVELOPS. I THOUGHT IT USEFUL TO SEND THIS TO YOU TO MAKE CERTAIN WE REMAIN ON SAME WAVELENGTH IN LIGHT OF EVOLVING THINKING IN WASHINGTON ABOUT OUR STRATEGY FOR BEGIN VISIT AND THE PERIOD BEYOND. WITH APPROPRIATE TAILORING, I WOULD PLAN TO FOLLOW SUBSTANTIALLY SAME APPROACH IN MY TALKS IN RIYADH. I WILL NEED ANY COMMENTS YOU WISH TO SEND BY 0900 LOCAL SATURDAY (0200 EST).

2. FINALLY, YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT SAM LEWIS IS ARRANGING FOR HIM AND ME TO HAVE TETE-A-TETE WITH DAYAN ON

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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8, TO HEAR DAYAN'S VIEWS AND TO LAY OUT OUR OWN THINKING ABOUT THE ELEMENTS OF REALISTIC INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS FOR WEST BANK/GAZA.

3. BEGIN TEXT.

OBJECTIVE

OUR PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVE IS TO GIVE HUSSEIN A REALISTIC AND SOUNDLY BASED IMPRESSION OF WHAT CAN BE ACHIEVED IN THE CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE PURPOSE OF MAINTAINING AND INCREASING HIS INTEREST IN BECOMING ENGAGED IN THEM, WITHOUT CROWDING HIM AT THIS STAGE. HE HAS BEEN IN A PESSIMISTIC MOOD, PERSUADED THAT SADAT'S CHANCES OF FAILING, OR ALTERNATIVELY OF GOING ALONE, OUTWEIGH THE CHANCES OF GETTING SOMEWHERE ON A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT. HE IS PARTICULARLY WORRIED THAT HIS JOINING THE NEGOTIATIONS WILL BE MERELY A COVER FOR SEPARATE EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI BILATERAL DEAL.

WE SPECIFICALLY WISH TO FEEL HIM OUT ON THE ELEMENTS OF FLEXIBILITY IN THE THREE MAJOR AREAS WHERE HE HAS POSTULATED SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ENGAGING HIMSELF: TERRITORIAL WITHDRAWALS, SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE PALESTINIANS, AND THE IDEA OF PALESTINIAN DELEGATION ALSO PARTICIPATING WITH HIM IN THE NEXT STAGE. HUSSEIN PROBABLY HAS FEW CLEAR IDEAS HIMSELF ON THESE POINTS AND IS MORE LIKELY TO REACT TO IDEAS WHICH WE RAISE WITH HIM. IN ADDITION, SUCH IDEAS WILL BEGIN A PROCESS WITH HIM OF ENCOURAGING HIM TO GIVE FURTHER NEEDED THOUGHT TO THESE POINTS.

WE NEED TO EMPHASIZE A NUMBER OF THEMES FOR HIM:

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-- THE PEACE PROCESS HAS BEGUN, REAL NEGOTIATIONS HAVE STARTED, WE ARE COMMITTED TO KEEPING THE PROCESS MOVING FORWARD TOWARD A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT;

-- THE US HAS NATIONAL INTERESTS IN THE REGION WHICH MAKE IT VITAL FOR US TO SEE NEGOTIATIONS SATISFACTORILY CONCLUDED, INCLUDING ARRANGEMENTS ON THE WEST BANK AND GAZA, LOOKING TOWARD FINAL SETTLEMENT AFTER AN INTERIM PERIOD, AND A RESOLUTION OF THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM IN ALL ITS ASPECTS;

-- WE HAVE A STRATEGY FOR THE FUTURE. THE NEXT STEP WILL BE A PROCESS FOCUSSED ON RESOLVING THE KEY ISSUES IN A DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES AND BEYOND THAT IN THE WEST BANK AND GAZA. THE BEGIN VISIT WILL PLAY AN IMPORTANT PART IN WORKING THROUGH THIS STRATEGY AND WILL BE FOLLOWED BY CONTINUING ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT ON OUR PART;

-- WE BELIEVE THAT A DECLARATION IS A NECESSARY NEXT STEP AND THAT NEGOTIATIONS FLOWING FROM IT CAN PRODUCE TERMS WHICH ARE BETTER FOR THE ARABS AND JORDAN THAN ARE NOW IMMEDIATELY APPARENT;

-- THERE IS A PROCESS OF CHANGE UNDER WAY IN ISRAEL AND
IN US PUBLIC OPINION;

-- WE UNDERSTAND FROM OUR PRIVATE TALKS THAT THERE IS MORE
FLEXIBILITY IN THE JORDANIAN POSITION THAN IMPLIED IN THE
PUBLIC STATEMENTS;

-- WE NEED TO TALK THROUGH TOGETHER AREAS WHERE FLEXIBILITY
IS POSSIBLE. IN THIS CONNECTION, WE HAVE SOME IDEAS OF
OUR OWN FOR THE WEST BANK AND GAZA;

-- WE BELIEVE JORDAN HAS AN IMPORTANT PART TO PLAY AND WE
LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING THE DIALOGUE WITH THE KING,
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LEADING TO THE CREATION OF REASONABLE CONDITIONS UNDER
WHICH HE CAN PLAY A DIRECT AND ACTIVE ROLE IN THE
NEGOTIATIONS.

TALKING POINTS

-- THE HONEYMOON PHASE OF NEGOTIATIONS ENDED ABRUPTLY WITH
THE EGYPTIAN WALK-OUT FROM JERUSALEM. THERE FOLLOWED A
PERIOD OF TENUOUS CONTACT BETWEEN EGYPT AND ISRAEL WITH
MUCH DISILLUSIONMENT ON BOTH SIDES. MY MISSION HAS KEPT
CONTACT ALIVE. SADAT HAS NOW SENT A MESSAGE TO BEGIN, AND BEGIN
WILL REPLY. BOTH SIDES WANT TO REACH AGREEMENT ON
A DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES AND PROGRESS IS BEING MADE.

-- THE DECLARATION IS LARGELY AGREED TO IF THERE CAN BE
AGREEMENT ON THE PARAGRAPH ON THE PALESTINIANS WHICH IS
OBVIOUSLY THE MOST DIFFICULT PART. BUT WE BELIEVE BOTH SIDES
ARE GROPING THEIR WAY TOWARD A MIDDLE GROUND WHICH WE BELIEVE
MUST BE SUBSTANTIALLY THE ASWAN FORMULATION.

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FOR INR SAUNDERS FROM ATHERTON

-- THE DECLARATION WILL NOT BE THE FAR-REACHING DOCUMENT THAT SADAT HOPED FOR; NOR WILL IT BE THE TOTALLY BLAND REHASH OF 242 THE ISRAELIS WOULD HAVE PREFERRED. IT WOULD BE A DEFINITE ADVANCE OVER 242 IN WHAT IT WOULD HAVE TO SAY ABOUT PALESTINIAN RIGHTS. IT WOULD AFFIRM THAT THE PALESTINIANS MUST PARTICIPATE IN DETERMINING THEIR FUTURE BUT THAT THIS MUST BE BALANCED BY THE INTERESTS OF THE PARTIES -- JORDAN, EGYPT, PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATIVES AND ISRAEL. THIS IS AN ACCURATE REFLECTION OF THE REALITY THAT WE ALL KNOW MUST GOVERN A SOLUTION OF THE "PALESTINIAN PROBLEM."

-- ISRAEL WILL NOT BE ABLE TO AGREE TO SUCH A FORMULATION WITHOUT MAKING DIFFICULT DECISIONS. DURING BEGIN'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON WE ARE PLANNING TO MAKE IT CLEAR WHAT WE BELIEVE THESE DECISIONS WILL HAVE TO BE IF THERE IS TO BE A DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES AND FURTHER PROGRESS IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. THERE WILL BE A PERIOD OF TIME THEREAFTER WHEN THE ISRAELI CABINET WRESTLES WITH THESE ISSUES, DURING WHICH ATHERTON MIGHT UNDERTAKE ANOTHER MISSION TO HELP THE TWO SIDES PUT THE DECLARATION IN FINAL SHAPE.

-- DURING THIS PERIOD WE ALSO HOPE TO ENGAGE BOTH SIDES IN
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THE BEGINNING OF DISCUSSIONS ON ITEM B OF THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE AGENDA. WE WOULD HOPE THAT AS WE DO SO WE CAN BEGIN TO FACTOR IN THE KING'S THINKING AS WELL. THE EGYPTIANS HAVE INDICATED TO US THEIR DESIRE TO HAVE THE BENEFIT OF THE KING'S IDEAS.

-- AGREEMENT ON A DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES WILL ENABLE THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE TO RECONVENE AND DISCUSSION TO BEGIN ON THE SECOND AGENDA ITEM -- THE ISSUES OF THE WEST BANK AND GAZA. BOTH THE EGYPTIANS AND ISRAELIS DEFINITELY WANT JORDAN AND HOPEFULLY PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATIVES TO JOIN FOR THESE DISCUSSIONS. NEITHER FEELS THEY ARE ABLE TO GO FAR INTO THE WEST BANK/GAZA ISSUES WITHOUT THE PRESENCE OF JORDAN.

-- WE WANT TO TALK TO THE KING VERY SERIOUSLY ABOUT THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH HE COULD JOIN THE NEGOTIATIONS WHEN THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE RECONVENES. WE HAVE HEARD THE PRECONDITIONS HE HAS STATED: AN ISRAELI COMMITMENT TO TOTAL WITHDRAWAL INCLUDING RESTORATION OF ARAB SOVEREIGNTY IN EAST JERUSALEM; SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE PALESTINIANS; PALESTINIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. THERE ARE UNDERSTANDABLE MAXIMAL ARAB GOALS AND THERE IS NO REASON WHY JORDAN SHOULD NOT THINK OF PUTTING THEM FORWARD AS ITS INITIAL POSITION IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. BUT IT IS NOT REALISTIC TO EXPECT THE ISRAELIS TO AGREE TO SUCH TERMS BEFORE NEGOTIATIONS EVEN BEGIN.

-- WE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR THE KING'S MORE PRECISE IDEAS ABOUT THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH HE COULD JOIN NEGOTIATIONS. IF THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES IS NOT ENOUGH, WOULD ISRAELI ASSURANCES THAT THEY ACCEPT CERTAIN GUIDELINES FOR NEGOTIATION OF AN INTERIM PLAN FOR THE WEST BANK, TOGETHER
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WITH AN ISRAELI ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THAT THE PRINCIPLE OF WITHDRAWAL APPLIES TO THE WEST BANK AND GAZA, BRING HIM IN? WHAT ARE THE KING'S IDEAS?

-- OUR OWN THINKING IS THAT THERE WILL HAVE TO BE SOME KIND OF TRANSITIONAL PHASE BEFORE THE NEGOTIATION OF FINAL TERMS FOR THE WEST BANK AND GAZA. A TIME BUFFER IS NEEDED TO ALLOW CONDITIONS TO EMERGE THAT WOULD ENABLE ARRANGEMENTS TO BE NEGOTIATED THAT ARE PROBABLY IMPOSSIBLE TODAY. THE ISRAELIS WILL WISH TO MAINTAIN A SECURITY PRESENCE DURING THIS PERIOD UNTIL THEY SEE WHAT EMERGES; AT THE SAME TIME SUCH A PLAN MUST CLEARLY LEAVE OPEN THE EVENTUAL RETURN OF THESE AREAS, WITH AGREED BORDER MODIFICATIONS AND SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS, TO ARAB SOVEREIGNTY THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS.

-- WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO HEAR THE KING'S IDEAS ABOUT HOW MODERATE YET REPRESENTATIVE PALESTINIANS MIGHT BE BROUGHT INTO THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE NEGOTIATIONS AT AN APPROPRIATE STAGE.

-- SADAT HAS CONTINUED TO STRESS TO US THE IMPORTANCE HE ATTACHES TO JORDAN JOINING THE NEGOTIATIONS. THIS IS WHY HE HAS ENGAGED HIMSELF IN TRYING TO REACH AGREEMENT ON A DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES RATHER THAN PROCEEDING EXCLUSIVELY IN THE MILITARY COMMITTEE WHERE HE COULD NO DOUBT BE ACHIEVING FASTER RESULTS. ON THIS PRESENT MISSION WE HAVE BEEN ASKED REPEATEDLY BY THE ISRAELIS: WHAT DOES SADAT DO IF WE REACH AGREEMENT ON THE DECLARATION AND

HUSSEIN DOES NOT JOIN THE NEGOTIATIONS? WE HAVE DISCOURAGED
THE ISRAELIS FROM THINKING THAT SADAT WILL GO IT ALONE.

-- WE RECOGNIZE THAT THE PRECISE WORDING OF THE DECLARATION
IS LESS IMPORTANT TO THE KING THAN SENSING THAT THE PEACE
PROCESS IS IRREVERSIBLE AND CAN PRODUCE TERMS HE CAN LIVE
WITH. AND MUCH DEPENDS ON HIS ASSESSMENT OF US INTENTIONS.

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WE BELIEVE OUR RECORD SPEAKS FOR ITSELF. WE HAVE ASSERTED
THE PALESTINIANS' RIGHT TO A HOMELAND AND THEIR RIGHT TO
PARTICIPATE IN THE DETERMINATION OF THEIR FUTURE. WE
HAVE EXPLICITLY STATED THAT THE PRINCIPLE OF WITHDRAWAL
MUST APPLY TO ALL THREE FRONTS. WE HAVE RESPONDED FAVORABLY
TO AIRCRAFT REQUESTS FOR SAUDI ARABIA AND EGYPT AND ARE
PREPARED TO TAKE ON THE UPHILL BATTLE TO GET APPROVAL FOR
THESE IN CONGRESS. THE US IS FULLY COMMITTED TO DOING
EVERYTHING IT CAN TO SEE THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS THROUGH
TO A SUCCESSFULL CONCLUSION.

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